

ABSTRACT

THESIS: A systematic analysis of behavior at Late Early Woodland paired-post circles

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Paired post circles (PPCs) are an architectural design that occur during the Late Early Woodland (400 B.C. to A.D. 50) in the mid-Ohio River valley. The activities conducted within paired-post structures have been debated for decades, starting with the interpretations of William S. Webb. Past interpretations have included house, village, mortuary camp, and funeral feast localities. The goal of this research was to present an alternative hypothesis for the activities conducted within the structure, and to systematically test this hypothesis and previous interpretations against the observed record. Four models were constructed: habitation, mortuary processing, feasting, and feminine space. The models contained an explicit classification paradigm from which to compare the expected artifactual distributions to the empirical distributions of all known PPCs. Artifact and feature frequency was gathered using site reports, catalogs, and direct observation and identification. The frequencies of artifact and feature types was then compared to the models within a Multiple Correspondence Analysis. The feasting model is the most robust when compared to the empirical evidence. The three alternative models are insufficient in their explanatory power, and statistically are dissimilar to the empirical composition of PPC artifact and feature frequencies.